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Cassis Resurrecting Tax Simplification Quest *Senator urges action on Taxpayer Bill of Rights*

(Lansing) – State Senator Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, is continuing a mission she started in the House of Representatives to simplify the state tax code for Michigan taxpayers.

“This is something every taxpayer in Michigan can benefit from,” Cassis said on Tuesday. “By making the code taxpayer friendly, people will be able to understand what taxes they are paying and why, and they will be more likely to file their taxes correctly, eliminating filing errors and avoiding burdensome fines.”

Sen. Cassis last year was instrumental in creating a law extending the period of time homeowners can receive homestead exemption refunds. Earlier this month, Cassis introduced a package of bills amending eight Michigan public acts referencing the Michigan homestead exemption.

Under the Cassis bills, the word “homestead” in the public acts would be replaced by the words “principal residence” because several homeowners were confusing the homestead exemption, which every homeowner must file, with the homestead credit, which only certain homeowners are eligible for.

“As chair of the Senate Finance Committee, I deal with all kinds of tax issues, some with tremendous fiscal impact on our economy, but this is an issue that will have a huge impact on our families without emptying our state’s change purse.”

Sen. Cassis’ unwritten Taxpayer Bill of Rights comes at a time when a massive state budget deficit will hinder spending on state departments and programs. Due to these budget constraints, issues such as tax simplification are likely to get more time and attention.

“One of the most effective ways to serve the taxpayers in Michigan happens to be one of the least expensive,” Cassis said. “This initiative is not about spending or saving money; it’s about creating a tax system that every one understands before they hand over their hard-earned dollars to the government.”

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